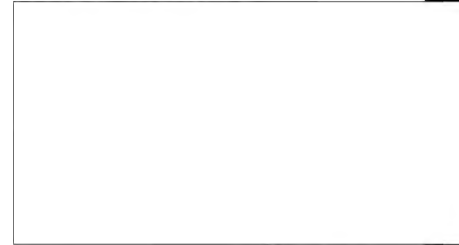




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***Saturday  
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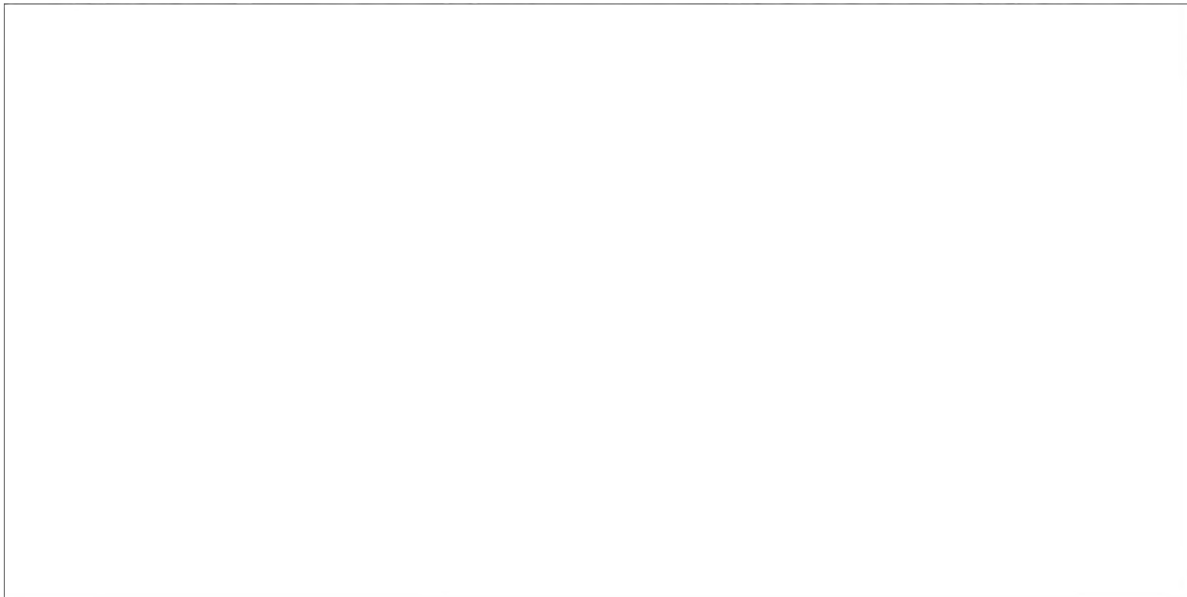


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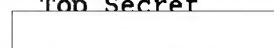


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EGYPT-US: Foreign Minister's Visit

*Egyptian Foreign Minister Ali's trip to the US this weekend is in part an attempt to alleviate increasing domestic concern over President Mubarak's performance.*

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Mubarak's handling of the crisis in Lebanon has reinforced these doubts. Opposition groups have strongly criticized the government for not taking stronger actions to protest the Israeli invasion.

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A recent sampling of opinion among military officers indicated that Mubarak is beginning to be singled out as a focus of criticism.

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Comment: Mubarak probably hopes that Ali's visit will be seen in Egypt as evidence that Cairo is playing a major diplomatic role in resolving the crisis in Lebanon. Ali will urge the US to compel Israel to withdraw quickly from Lebanon, possibly in conjunction with a Syrian pullout. Mubarak probably will rule out Egyptian participation in new autonomy negotiations as long as Israeli forces remain in Lebanon.

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Ali also will reiterate Egyptian concerns that a prolonged Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon could strengthen radical forces in the Arab world and damage the Egyptian-Israeli normalization process.

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USSR-CHINA-US: Status of Relations

*Soviet officials claim to be encouraged about their relations with China, but the Chinese are emphasizing that Beijing does not plan major improvements in the relationship and are also implying that changes in Sino-US ties will not alter China's hostility toward the USSR.*

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Moscow [ ] claimed for several months that Sino-Soviet relations will gradually improve, and the Soviet Embassy in Beijing reportedly believes that China will respond to recent Soviet overtures. Last week Chinese Foreign Ministry officials told US Embassy officers, however, that the Soviet presence along China's borders, in Mongolia and Afghanistan, and the USSR's support for Vietnam preclude a warming in relations. [ ]

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Although the Chinese officials again underscored the need for a settlement with the US of the Taiwan problem, they played down the significance of China's criticism of US policy in the Third World and elsewhere. In their view, prospects for US-Chinese relations have become more positive following Vice President Bush's recent visit. [ ]

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EL SALVADOR: Heavy Government Losses

*The Salvadoran military appears to be on the verge of a major defeat in northern Morazan Department.* [REDACTED]

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Military units attempting to recapture the town of Perquin reportedly suffered as many as 400 casualties. The town was captured by insurgents early this week while government forces were heavily involved in an offensive in Chalatenango Department. Attempts to retake the town have been hampered by rugged terrain, the destruction of a key bridge, poor communications and insurgent anti-aircraft fire. [REDACTED]

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Government forces also are under siege in the nearby village of San Fernando. Efforts to send reinforcements north from San Francisco have left the departmental capital itself vulnerable to insurgent attack. As a result, the military is considering sending two quick-reaction battalions to the area. [REDACTED]

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